

Duck Soup

Math Bass (USA)
Paul Cowan (USA)
Egill Sæbjörnsson (ISL)

The group exhibition *Duck Soup* takes its name from the Marx Brother's most celebrated film and brings together three artists whose work meets in its graphic iconography, a pop sensibility, humour and playfulness. The two painters, Math Bass and Paul Cowan, share a reduced graphic and whimsical quality in their visual language. Icelandic artist Egill Sæbjörnsson is known for his humorous and sometimes absurd video-and-object installations in which physical objects interact with projected objects or actions. Many of his works contain a spirit of animism in which inert objects take on a life of their own.

LA artist Math Bass's practice originates in ritualistic performance in which she investigates the body and the idea of shelter. In her series of paintings *NEWZ!* Bass uses a narrow vocabulary of repeated motifs and symbols, which together build up systems and structures. Her abstracted visual language recalls the graphic iconography of children's books and board games, using strong visual elements such as fire, smoke and cigarettes, cylinders, crocodiles and arches.

Milwaukee-based artist, Paul Cowan, participates with paintings from two ongoing series and an intervention in the space in the form of a painted wall scented with Bergamot Oil. One group of his free-hanging paintings are produced in collaboration with a commercial sign painter in which Cowan out-sources the actual painting by isolating gestural elements and colors from Mexican bodega and advertisement signage in the same primary-colored enamel paints. Cowan removes himself from the physical process of painting also in the second series of works in which monochrome textiles are stretched on the frame and adorned simply with a single or two fishing lures. The lures themselves are painted (though not by the artist) and invoke the steady movements of fly-fishing as a substitute for the gesture of painting.

Egill Sæbjörnsson participates with two works. *Stálhillur II* from 2012 comprises five wood boxes with steel tops attached to the wall, which resonate each time virtual balls are projected falling upon them. The resulting cacophony of xylophone tones, combined with the falling balls, has the sporadic insistence of a pinball game. In his earlier work, *Eraser & Ruler* (2010), a shelf supporting a stapler, a cup holding pens and scissors and an eraser and ruler are animated by the projection of the artist's arm and hand picking up the eraser and flicking it into the air with the ruler. Once in the air the eraser's trajectory takes on a life of its own till it lands again back in place.

Math Bass (b. 1981) lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her MFA from UCLA. Bass's work was included in the Hammer Museum's biennial *Made in L.A.* in 2012. Bass's work has been included in exhibitions at Overduin & Co., Los Angeles (2014), WallSpace in New York, Michael Jon Gallery, Miami, Human Resources, Los Angeles (2013), Overduin and Kite, Los Angeles (2012), 2nd Floor Projects, San Francisco (2010). In 2013 Overduin & Co made a solo presentation of her work at Art Basel Miami Beach.

Paul Cowan (b. 1985) lives and works in Milwaukee. He received his MFA from University of Illinois. In 2012 Cowan presented a solo exhibition at Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Other selected solo exhibitions include Jonathan Viner, London (2014), Shane Campbell, Chicago (2013), Clifton Benevento, New York (2012). Group exhibitions include ReMap, Athens (2013), James Cohan Gallery, New York, ICA, Philadelphia, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2012).

Egill Sæbjörnsson (b. 1973) lives and works in Reykjavik and Berlin. He received his MFA Icelandic College of Arts and Crafts. In April 2014 his permanent video work *KASKADE* was inaugurated at Kunstmuseum AHLEN, Germany. Selected solo exhibitions include I8 Gallery, Reykjavik (2012), Künstlerhaus, Bremen, Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2011), Selected group exhibitions include Kunstakademie Münster, Münster (2013), EMAF – European Media Art Festival, Osnabrück, DAKART biennial, Nordic Pavilion, Dakar (2012), Carnegie Art Award, CIAC, Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Carros/Nice (2011), La Maison Rouge, Paris, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt (2010).

Vernissage: 15th May 2014, 17.00 – 20.00
Exhibition period: 16th May – 19th June 2014
Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 11.00 – 18.00, Saturday 12.00 – 16.00

Installation views are available after the opening at www.nordenhake.com
Please contact the gallery for further information and press images

Upcoming exhibition: **Sirous Namazi**, 21st August – 27 September 2014